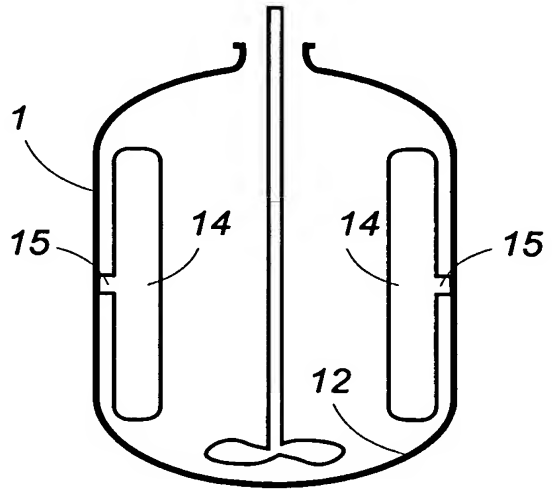
REMARKS

The drawings are objected to for the reasons noted in the official action, i.e., the failure to label Fig. 18 as Prior Art and the failure to show the features of claims 39 and 40 in the drawings. All of the raised drawing objections are believed to be overcome by the requested drawing amendments accompanying the attached Submission. In particular, Figure 18 is now designated with a Prior Art legend while new Figure 20 is entered to show the subject matter of claims 39 and 40. It will be appreciated that new Figure 20 shows a container that is identical to original Fig. 1 except for the arrangement of the baffles secured to the interior wall. In this new Figure, the baffles are arranged "along a theoretical curve forming a helix on the internal wall 12 of the tank or container . . . or can be positioned differently whilst their relative positioning continues to follow the basic shape of a helix", as described in the original specification in paragraphs [091] and [092] and recited in original claims 20 and 21. In view of this disclosure, the Applicant avers that the new Figure 20 does not contain any new subject matter and the Applicant respectfully request entry of the same.

Next, claims 21, 22, 26, 34, 35, 37 and 38 are rejected, under 35 U.S.C. § 102, as being anticipated in view of EP 1208905 ("EP `905") or EP 1172138 ("EP `138"). The Applicant asserts that neither EP `905 and EP `138 alone or in combination teach, suggest or disclose the distinguishing features as presently claimed.

The claims of the present invention relate to a baffle for a container. The container has an internal wall with baffles secured thereto such that the baffles are integral with the container. The baffles are spaced from the wall and connected to the wall by at least one connection. The inner wall, the baffles and the connections are glass-lined for protection. The connections are glass-lined after being secured to the internal wall for protection. The glass-lining is thus applied to the interior of the wall and to the connections at the same time, so they all have a uniform glass-lining.



A majority of the references applied by the Examiner relate to baffles, however, it is respectfully submitted that these baffles can not be effectively glass-lined for at least the following reasons.

First, the baffles of the applied references have a geometry that is not suitable for glass-lining. As discussed in paragraph [009] of the pending application, sharp edges and angular zones that are typical on baffles and/or the connections between the baffles and the internal wall of the container reduce the integrity of the glass-lined protective coating.

Second, the applied references generally teach connections between the baffles and the internal wall of the container that are not suitable for glass-lining. As discussed in paragraphs [010] and [011] of the pending application, know connections between the baffles and the internal wall of the container result in excessive mechanical stress because of thermal expansion induced by heat treatment of glass-lining. Accordingly, the connections of a baffle to an interior surface of a container must be short and have smooth and curved surfaces in order to be suitable for glass-lining.

Turning now to EP `905, this reference relates to and teaches an agitation vessel used to produce a suspension of solids. The vessel 10 comprises a tank 1 having sidewalls 3 to which a number of baffles 7 are connected. As best shown in Fig. 1, each baffle is connected to the tank 1 by two supports. Each support is connected to the baffle by a number of screws, rivets or nuts and bolts. Due to the above enumerated reasons, these types of connections are very difficult to enamel. The bolts and nuts or screws, used to connect the baffles 7 to the supports, have a number of sharp edges and angular zones. Furthermore, the supports have two parallel edges that extend normal to an edge of the baffle such that there are sharp angles and connections between the supports and the baffles 7. it is respectfully submitted that these aspects as well as the specific teachings, suggestions and/or disclosures of of EP `905 are contrary to the presently claimed invention.

Turning now to EP `138, this reference relates to and teaches a reactor with a heat exchanger and includes a top 2. Fig. 2 of EP `138 shows an annular intermediate unit 3 sandwiched between and coupled to the reactor 1 and the top 2 by a number of bolts 9. The annular intermediate unit 3 includes a number of heat exchanger plates 5 each of which are coupled at their base to a circular conduit 6 and at their top to straight conduit 4. The top conduit 4 of each exchanger plate 5 extends into the annular intermediate unit 3 and leads to an inlet and outlet 7, 8. It is respectfully submitted that the teachings, suggestions and/or disclosures of EP `138 are vastly different from the presently claimed invention.

The Applicant asserts that the heat exchanger 5 plates of EP `138 are connected to an annular intermediate unit 3 that is then coupled to the upper and lower portions of the container 1, 2 by way of a number of bolts 9. There is no local connection between the baffle and the interior wall of the

container. This is in direct contrast to the presently pending claims which require the baffle and the interior wall of the container to be coupled by a local connection.

The heat exchangers 5 of EP `138 are also distinct from the claimed baffles. The EP `138 heat exchangers 5 are not baffles and serve a different purpose and function than the claimed baffles. That is, these heat exchangers 5 transfer heat between the fluid flowing in and out of the container by way of the inlet and the outlet 7, 8 and the fluid inside the container possibly being agitated by the unit 10.

Next, claims 25, 28, 29 and 31-33 are rejected, under 35 U.S.C. § 103, as being unpatentable in view of either EP `905 or EP `138 and either Kirschner `977 (German Patent No. 197 23 977 A1), Nocera `368 (United States Patent No. 3,265,368) or Kropp `870 (United States Patent No. 3,334,870), claim 36 is rejected, under 35 U.S.C. § 103, as being unpatentable in view of EP `905 and MacLean `865 (United States Patent No. 2,159,856) while claims 39 and 40 are rejected, under 35 U.S.C. § 103, as being unpatentable in view of either EP `905 or EP `138 and either Cowley `262 (United States Patent No. 4,276,262) or Baker et al. `962 (United States Patent No. 5,632,962). The Applicant acknowledges and respectfully traverses all of the raised obviousness rejections in view of the above amendments and the following remarks.

Kirschner `977 relates to a stainless steel reactor 11 having a standard baffle. This reactor 11 also includes an integrated means 6 for cooling the reactor 11 during a polymerization process. It is respectfully submitted that the disclosed baffle is standard baffle which is not suited for glass-lining due to the sharp edges and angular zones discussed above.

Nocera `368 relates to reactor 10 and a baffle 14 that is introduced into the reactor 10 through an aperture 8 at the top of the reactor 10. Unlike the presently pending claims, the baffle is not secured to the internal wall of the reactor but is instead suspended inside the reactor. There is no local connection secured to the internal wall of the reactor.

Kropp `870 relates to a container 10 and a baffle 14 that are very similar to the baffle disclosed by Nocera `368. Like Nocera `368, the baffle14 of Kropp `870 is introduced into the reactor 10 through an aperture 8 at the top of the reactor 10. Furthermore, Kropp `870 likewise teaches that the baffle 14 is not secured to the internal wall of the reactor 10 but is instead suspended inside the reactor and there is no local connection securing the baffle to the internal wall of the reactor.

MacLean `865 relates to a mixing apparatus that includes a tank 6 with baffles 12, 13, each of which is secured to the internal wall of the tank 6 with two supporting rods 14. Similar to EP `905 or EP `138, it is respectfully submitted that the geometry of the disclosed baffles of MacLean `865 is not suited for glass-lining due to the sharp edges and angular zones. This document discloses several baffles laid out appreciably along a helix curve relative to the internal wall of the tank.

Cowley `262 relates to a generator 10 having a single baffle 34 that is directly secured to the internal wall of the generator 10. Unlike the pending claims, the baffle 34 according to Cowley `262 is not held at distance from the adjacent interior wall of the container 10 by a local connection. Furthermore, Cowley `262 does not teach, suggest or even remotely hint at applying a glass-lining to the baffle, or interior surface of the container as currently claimed. It is respectfully submitted that the geometry of the disclosed Cowley `262 baffle, like those above, is not suitable for glass-lining because it is too long and would result in excessive mechanical stress during thermal expansion, and because it has sharp edges and angular zones.

Baker `962 relates to a process wheel having a baffle that is very similar to the baffle disclosed above by Cowley `262. This baffle is likewise not secured to and held at distance from the adjacent interior wall of the container, and further it is not secured to the wall of the container by a local connection, as presently claimed. In addition, it is respectfully submitted that the geometry of the Baker `962 baffle is not suitable for glass-lining because it is too long and would result in excessive mechanical stress during thermal expansion, and because it has sharp edges and angular zones.

In view of the above noted reasons, although the additional references of Kirschner `977, Norcera `368, Kropp `870, Maclean `865, Cowley `262 and Baker et al. `962 may arguably relate to the features indicated by the Examiner in the official action, the Applicant respectfully submits that the combination of the base references of either, or both, EP `905" or EP `138 with these additional references still fails to in any way teach, suggest or disclose the above distinguishing features of the presently claimed invention. As such, all of the raised rejections should be withdrawn at this time in view of the above amendments and remarks.

In order to emphasize the above noted distinctions between the presently claimed invention and the applied art, independent claim 37 now recites the features of "an external surface of the baffle and an external surface of the local connection are glass-lined, the external surface of the local connection being glass-lined during a glass-lining process after the local connection is secured to the internal wall (12), and the external surface of the baffle, the external surface of the local connection and the internal surface of the container form an assembled group of glass-lined parts which are assembled together with one another" and new independent claim 41 of this application now recites the features of "the inner wall and the local connections are glass-lined after being welded with one another such that the inner wall and the local connections have a *common uniform* glass-lining". Such features are believed to clearly and patentably distinguish the presently claimed invention from all of the art of record, including the applied art.

If any further amendment to this application is believed necessary to advance prosecution and place this case in allowable form, the Examiner is courteously solicited to contact the undersigned representative of the Applicant to discuss the same.

In view of the above amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the raised rejections should be withdrawn at this time. If the Examiner disagrees with the Applicant's view concerning the withdrawal of the outstanding rejections or applicability of the EP `905, EP `138, Kirschner `977, Norcera `368, Kropp et al. `870, Maclean `865, Cowley `262 and/or Baker et al. `962 references, the Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to indicate the specific passage or passages, or the drawing or drawings, which contain the necessary teaching, suggestion and/or disclosure required by case law. As such teaching, suggestion and/or disclosure is not present in the applied references, the raised rejection should be withdrawn at this time. Alternatively, if the Examiner is relying on his/her expertise in this field, the Applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to enter an affidavit substantiating the Examiner's position so that suitable contradictory evidence can be entered in this case by the Applicant.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the raised rejection(s) should be withdrawn and this application is now placed in a condition for allowance. Action to that end, in the form of an early Notice of Allowance, is courteously solicited by the Applicant at this time.

The Applicant respectfully requests that any outstanding objection(s) or requirement(s), as to the form of this application, be held in abeyance until allowable subject matter is indicated for this case.

In the event that there are any fee deficiencies or additional fees are payable, please charge the same or credit any overpayment to our Deposit Account (Account No. 04-0213).

Respectfully submitted,

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